MANAGEMENT OF ANIMALS.

Rich people do not keep all their stock together in their own kraal. Usually they give some of them to their friends
● 233 or relations to look after. The latter take the milk as a reward for their trouble. Owners of animals when visiting those friends or relations who are responsible for them, take careful notice of the colour of the offspring in order to check any mischief on the part of an untrustworthy friend or relation. Keen cattle-owners rarely give their animals to doubtful friends or to those living in remote places where frequent visits would be difficult. During dry seasons when grazing becomes scanty some owners remove their herds to better pastures and return them only when their own pastures have improved. This is not, however, the usual custom and it is more usual to take the cattle to better pastures early in the morning and return them late in the evening. The former practice is adopted during a general dry season when wide areas of veld become useless for herding. The length of time that the animals are allowed to remain out grazing each day varies with the quality of the pasture. The quality of the grazing around the Kavirondo Gulf depends upon the season of the year. In winter when there is much rain, cattle remain on the pastures for a very short time, roughly about seven hours; whereas in summer, they may remain as long as twelve hours. Sheep and goats remain on the pasture for about five to six hours in winter and in summer for about seven hours a day. These animals are usually herded together with the unweaned calves. Weaned calves go with the main herd of cattle unless owing to climatic conditions or disease they are somewhat debilitated.

During the night cattle are brought in and tied up with ropes inside the kraal. Bulls, oxen and strong cows are tied near the gate while young beasts are tied in the centre. Goats, sheep and young calves are stabled in a stable where a smouldering fire made from dry cow or goat dung is kept every night. At sunrise they are brought out and tied in the sun in front of the stable until herding time.

232 An intelligent cattle-owner usually castrates all the bulls that he thinks are useless for stud purposes and keeps only one good one for breeding. The effect of this good bull on the herd is often spoilt by casual services from bad bulls belonging to less progressive people in the village who think they will be noticed and honoured when their bulls run after cows. As a rule a bull is not allowed to serve its mother or sisters, although this may happen when there is no unrelated bull in the herd. Expert owners usually castrate bulls before they are allowed to run with their mothers and arrange the services of their female stock so that they calve at the beginning of the long rains. Unfortunately only a few people think of these methods of improving their herds.

When a cow calves about two days are allowed to pass while the calf is suckled before milking commences. The milk obtained from the cow during the first two weeks or until the umbilical cord of the calf drops, is all drunk by young men in the village. This milk is stored in a pot in which a little buttermilk, which has been treated with urine, has been placed. As mentioned before the Luo believe that drinking fresh whole milk is the cause of tapeworm infestation, and the buttermilk is added to the fresh milk so as to eliminate this danger. When the umbilical cord of the calf has dropped the woman who owns the cow is allowed to use the milk for churning butter. The roots of a plant known in Luo as *obuwo* is added to the churning calabash as a preserving agent because fresh milk is stored in the calabash for about twelve to twenty-four hours before churning. During the churning process a little bovine urine, which has been stored for a few days, is added to the milk to accelerate the formation and facilitate the separation of the butter. This urine is also believed to be a good preservative for both the butter and the buttermilk, which will be stored for use in cooking various kinds of food. On the day the first butter is made into ghee, a little of the ghee is fed to the calf and the rest eaten by a group of people in the house. The reason why a sample of the first ghee is given to the calf is not very clear; but some people say that it protects the calf from developing diarrhoea and indigestion when the later butter of the dam is boiled and made into ghee. They believe that otherwise the boiling of the butter during ghee-making would cause diarrhoea in the calf.

Milking is done twice a day, in the morning and evening, by the boys and young men. Girls, women and old men are only allowed to milk in homes where there are no young men. Before commencing milking, the calf is allowed to suck its dam for a minute. It is then tied in front of the dam while she is milked. After some milk has been drawn the calf is allowed to suck for another minute and then re-tied while more milk is taken. Finally, the calf is allowed to suck and stay with the dam for about an hour, after which it is separated from the mother for at least ten hours before the next milking.

If a cow is slow to wean her calf a method used for drying her off is to fix a muzzle (*osembo*) on which strong thorns are fixed around the mouth of the calf so that when it tries to suck, the thorns prick the dam and cause her to kick the calf away. Another device is to smear the teats of the dam with cow dung, the taste of which stops the calf from sucking.

If the calf dies, its hide is dried, folded properly and a little salt solution is sprinkled on it to make it taste pleasant when licked by the dam while being milked. Before milking, the teats are washed or cleaned with warm water to stimulate the milk flow.

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resistance to the forward march of Progress in the agricultural field. No spontaneous wish for any branch of Progress except the political seems to have gripped the collective Luo mind. Here, on these hot and apathetic lakeland flats, all the impetus has come from Europeans.

It might be argued that the Government has no call to make people change their ways against their will. This indeed is an argument much used by Luo politicians. It is an old story: should nanny sit by and watch Master Robert break up his toys—in this case, ruin the soil, create acute erosion, turn the whole of Nyanza province, which contains one-third of Kenya's population, into a great rural slum?

Beyond question, that was going on. In Nyanza province there are over two million cattle, about one to every two acres. It would be a job to support this rate of stocking on the finest pastures under skilled management; here it is utterly impossible. The cattle have become so small and shrivelled that they are really not much larger than Great Danes, but their sharp hoofs can still make and deepen gullies as they track a way to springs. During the last three years, the output of crops in the province has halved, because yields have dropped so sharply. Yet there are more and more mouths to feed.

All the evils of land abuse were here displayed in concentrated form. No manure, no rotations, no resting land under grass; maize or cotton again and again, planted too late and in the wrong manner; no trees, communal grazing destroyed by useless skinny little beasts. It was not for want of trying by the technical staff. For years they had been urging, persuading, bullying, demonstrating, and they had scarcely dented Luo indifference and complacency. Famine was beginning to threaten these overcrowded areas—for the one thing the people continued to produce more and more of was their own kind.

II

And so the Government decided that the only salvation for the Luo lay in dividing their communally owned land into individual holdings. Land consolidation—the first stage

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question of bribery and corruption crops up everywhere and all concerned on the official side recognize it as their deepest enemy. But when I put Mr. Ayan's points to them they were a little sceptical. 'Of course there is bribery,' they said, 'but it is not as bad as that. And it is not the people who oppose land reforms, it is the politicians.' Mr. Ayan had just sent a telegram to the Governor asking for the removal of the 'reactionary D.C.' in Kisumu, so relations were naturally a bit strained.

VI

On the way to Maseno we had passed the ostensible *casus belli* between District Council and Government: the Kisiani hills, a barren, rocky bluff entirely denuded of vegetation and a scene of the most gruesome erosion, given over to goats browsing on boulders and any indomitable weed that had managed to germinate. This place had been leased by the District Council to the Government for the purpose of afforestation and about 800 acres of trees had been planted at a cost of £13,000.

Afforestation is unpopular. Goats were allowed to destroy the Kisiani seedlings and, when the forest department put up fences, people came and tore them down in the night. Others started to cultivate in defiance not only of the terms of the lease, but of regulations which forbid cultivation on steep hillsides. All this, in the official view, was part of a deliberate political campaign to stir up anti-Government feeling.

The Kisiani quarrel brought to a head bad feeling between the Central Nyanza District Council and the Government. All the Councillors are African save for the chairman, who is the D.C. Most of its senior technical staff are European and, in particular, it employs (as do all District Councils with large revenues) a fully qualified accountant to manage its finances.

Those elected Councillors most anxious for unrestricted freedom objected strongly to this accountant. Africans, they said, should have the spending of African money without European interference. Officials retorted that in proper,